

REMARKS

As a result of the foregoing amendments, Claim 9 has been cancelled, and new Claim 31 has been added. Accordingly, Claims 1-8 and 10-31 are pending in this application, with Claims 13 and 15-21 having been withdrawn from consideration.

Applicant's attorney thanks Examiner Tyson for the telephonic interview conducted on September 27, 2007 in connection with the present application. Applicant's attorney also thanks Examiner Tyson for reviewing the draft version of the foregoing amendments and for providing her comments regarding the same in an October 18, 2007 telephone conference with applicant's attorney.

With reference to the Office Action, applicant's attorney notes that independent Claim 1 has been rejected as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 3,910,282 to Messer et al. ("the Messer et al. Patent") in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,891,164 to Dabir et al. ("the Dabir et al. Patent"). More particularly, the Office Action indicates that the Messer et al. Patent discloses some of the elements of Claim 1, but does not disclose an adhesive. The Dabir et al. Patent discloses a needle (20) which includes a bore (32) in which a suture (38) may be secured using cyanoacrylate glue as an adhesive. Claim 1 was also rejected based on U.S. Patent No. 3,394,704 to Dery ("the Dery Patent"), which discloses a needle body (7) having a bore (9), a thread (6) received in the bore (9) and a bonding agent (11) which adheres to the wall of the bore (9).

During the aforesaid interview, Examiner Tyson, Examiner Ho and applicant's attorney discussed the outstanding prior art rejections of independent Claim

1 and of its associated dependent Claim 9 contained in the Office Action. As indicated in the Interview Summary mailed October 9, 2007, Examiner Tyson and Examiner Ho suggested certain claim revisions which would overcome the prior art rejections in the Office Action. By the foregoing amendments, these revisions have been effected in Claim 1. More particularly, Claim 1 has been amended to include the features recited in Claim 9 (i.e., a needle hole having a first diameter proximate a first end of the needle, and a second diameter distal to the first end and distal to the first diameter, the second diameter being greater than the first diameter), and to clarify the location of the hole with respect to the ends of the needle. In such circumstances, applicant's attorney respectfully submits that the Messer et al., Dabir et al. and Dery Patents fail to disclose or suggest, whether considered alone or in combination with each other, the armed suture recited in amended independent Claim 1. It is therefore further respectfully submitted that all of the prior art rejections of Claim 1 have now been overcome, and that amended independent Claim 1 is in condition for allowance.

With respect to Claims 2-8, 10-12, 14, and 22-30, which were also rejected in the Office Action on prior art grounds, all of them now depend from amended independent Claim 1.¹ In such circumstances, Claims 2-8, 10-12, 14, and 22-30 are also believed to be in condition for allowance.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, applicant and his attorney respectfully request reexamination and allowance of Claims 1-8, 10-12, 14, and 22-30, and the examination and allowance of new Claim 31. If, however, such

¹ Claims 10 and 11, which previously depended from Claim 9, have been amended to depend directly from Claim 1.

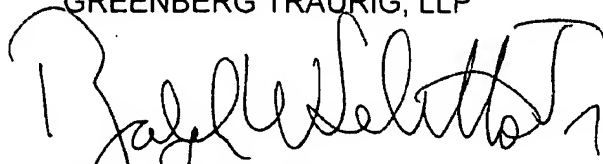
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action cannot be taken, the Examiner is cordially invited to place a telephone call to applicant's attorney in order that any outstanding issue may be resolved.

If there are any additional fees due as a result of this Amendment, including extension and petition fees, the Examiner is hereby authorized to charge them to Deposit Account No. 501561.

Respectfully Submitted,

GREENBERG TRAURIG, LLP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ralph W. Selitto, Jr.", is written over the printed name.

By: Ralph W. Selitto, Jr.
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